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Eleventh Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Europe
Brussels, 22-25 June 2015

Draft report

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Current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation

1. At its 1st and 2nd meeting, held on 22 June, the Meeting considered item 3 of the agenda, entitled "Current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation". For its consideration of the item, the Meeting had before it two reports prepared by the Secretariat, entitled "Statistical analysis of drug trafficking trends in Europe and worldwide" (UNODC/HONEURO/11/2) and "Current situation with respect to regional and subregional cooperation in South-Eastern and Eastern Europe" (UNODC/HONEURO/11/3). In addition, country reports on the illicit drug trafficking situation were submitted by Armenia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, the Russian Federation and Turkey (UNODC/HONEURO/11/CRP.1-22).

2. Representatives of the Secretariat introduced the item. An audiovisual presentation provided an overview of illicit drug trafficking trends across the region and worldwide. Another presentation informed about the support provided by UNODC through its Regional Programme for South-Eastern Europe and about UNODC initiatives in Eastern Europe. A presentation on the national approach to the world drug problem was made by the representative of Belgium.

3. The Meeting discussed current drug trafficking trends in Europe and approaches to countering them, with reference to particular cases and important seizures made. The involvement of organized criminal groups in drug trafficking was also discussed.

* Available only in English, French, Russian and Spanish, which are the working languages of the subsidiary body.

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4. Reference was made to seizures of heroin, cocaine, amphetamine and methamphetamine. One delegation referred to trafficking in buprenorphine. Information was shared on the continued use of the Balkan route for heroin trafficking from Afghanistan. Concern was expressed about the increased use of the Southern route, a situation which was calling for additional capacity-guiding efforts for African countries. The gap of information regarding the use of the Northern route was also mentioned. The challenges caused by cocaine trafficking via Western Africa and the Mediterranean from Latin America were also discussed.

5. Many countries indicated increased seizures in cannabis, which remained the most commonly spread substance on the market. Concern was raised by several delegations about the increased level of THC in cannabis products, due to genetically modified seeds. The Meeting discussed the increase in indoor and domestic production sites for cannabis, often managed by foreign nationals.

6. Participants discussed emerging challenges, in particular the steep rise of new psychoactive substances as well as the use of the Internet and of the postal service and international courier services for drug trafficking purposes. With regard to new psychoactive substances, a number of delegations referred to the need for immediate reaction even before these substances are scheduled under national or international law. Some participants reported on newly enacted legislation in this regard. Delegations discussed new channels of distribution of new psychoactive substances and the challenges encountered in developing effective detecting techniques. The challenges created by the use of the Internet and increasingly sophisticated forms of payment transactions required adequate responses. Reference was also made to the fact that new psychoactive substances also created challenges in testing drug use among drivers.

7. Several delegations stressed the importance of a balanced approach in order to effectively address the world drug problem, covering demand reduction, supply reduction and international cooperation. The need for a common and shared responsibility involving countries of origin, countries of transit and countries of destination was also stressed. Reference was made to the need to involve various governmental stakeholders, including law enforcement and customs, financial authorities and data collection agencies.

8. Several delegations emphasized the importance of involving non-governmental organizations and civil society, including the youth, in particular with regard to prevention and awareness-raising activities, thereby also drawing on the opportunities offered by social media. The importance of effective public-private partnerships as well as of cooperation initiatives with organizations such as UNODC, EU and other regional organizations was also stressed.